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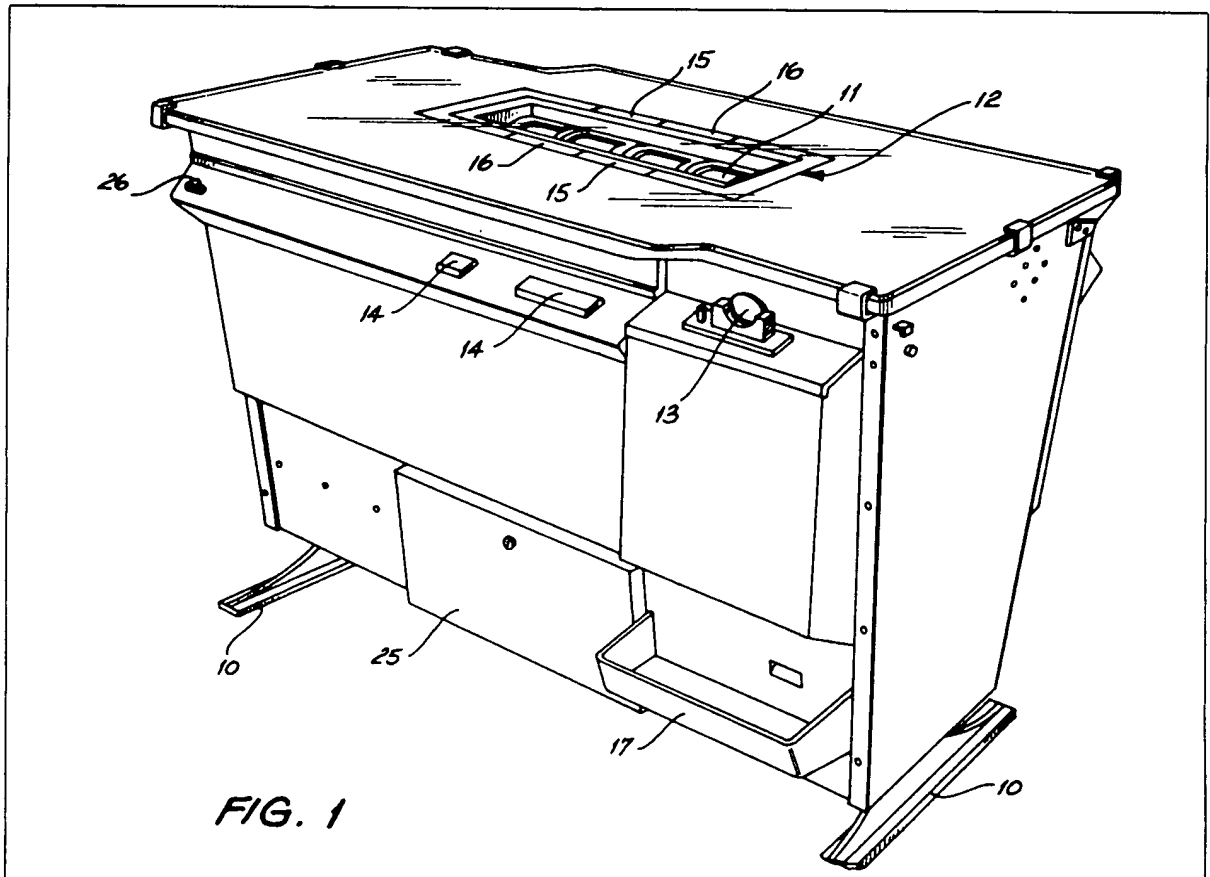
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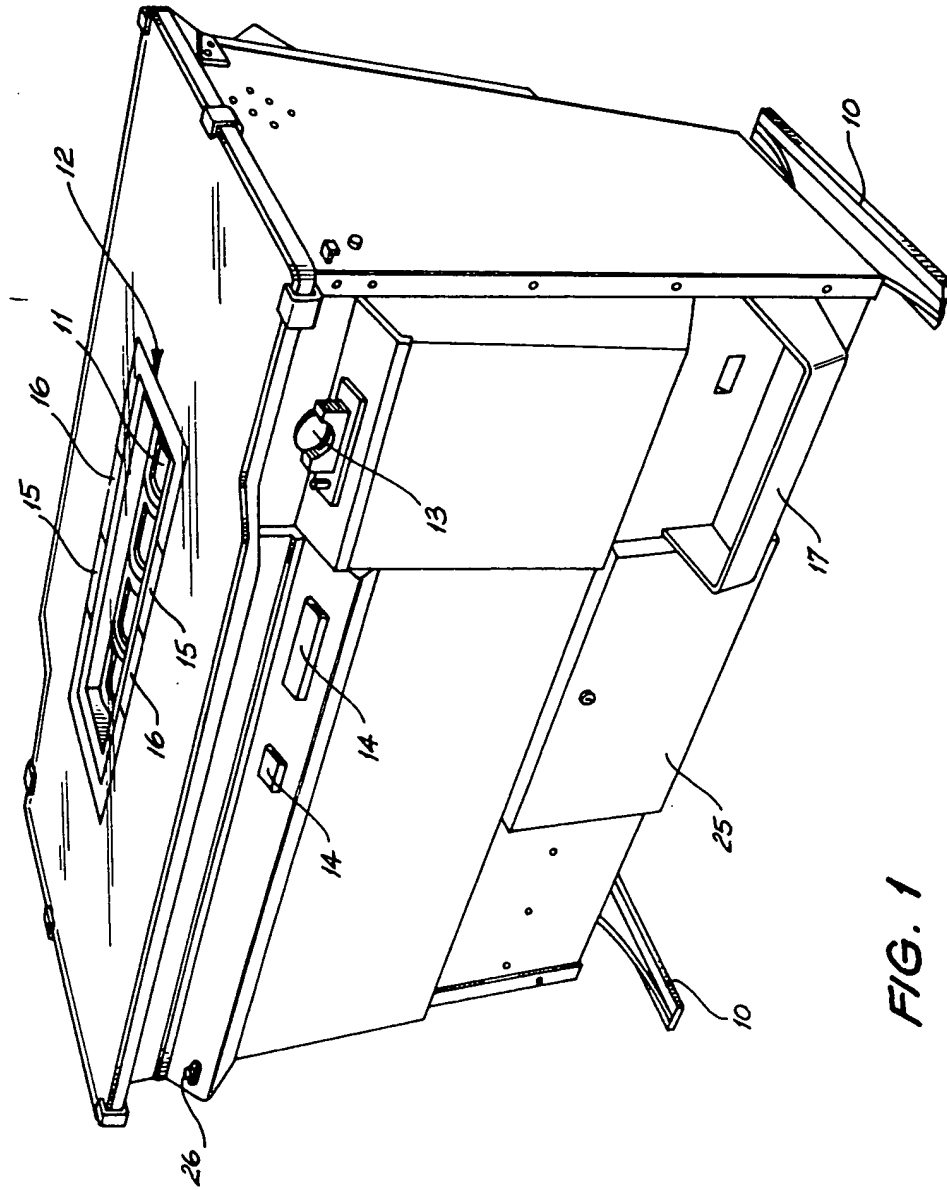
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can be played by a player or players
seated at the table constituted by
the cabinet.

(54) Table top poker machine

(57) A poker machine, is enclosed in
a cabinet in the form of a table or
like article of furniture the symbols
of the reels 11 of the machine
being displayed through a horizon-
tal window 12 in the table surface,
the controls 13, 14 of the machine
being arranged so that the machine





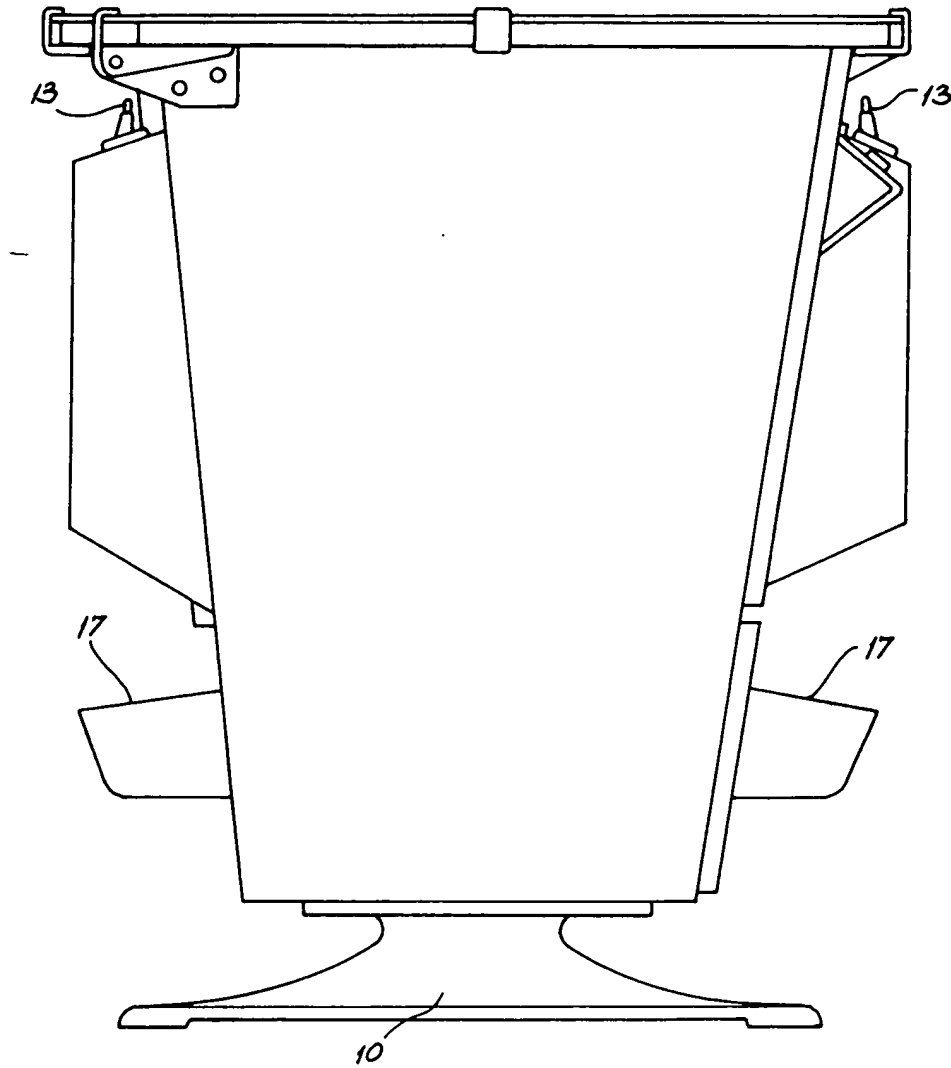


FIG. 2

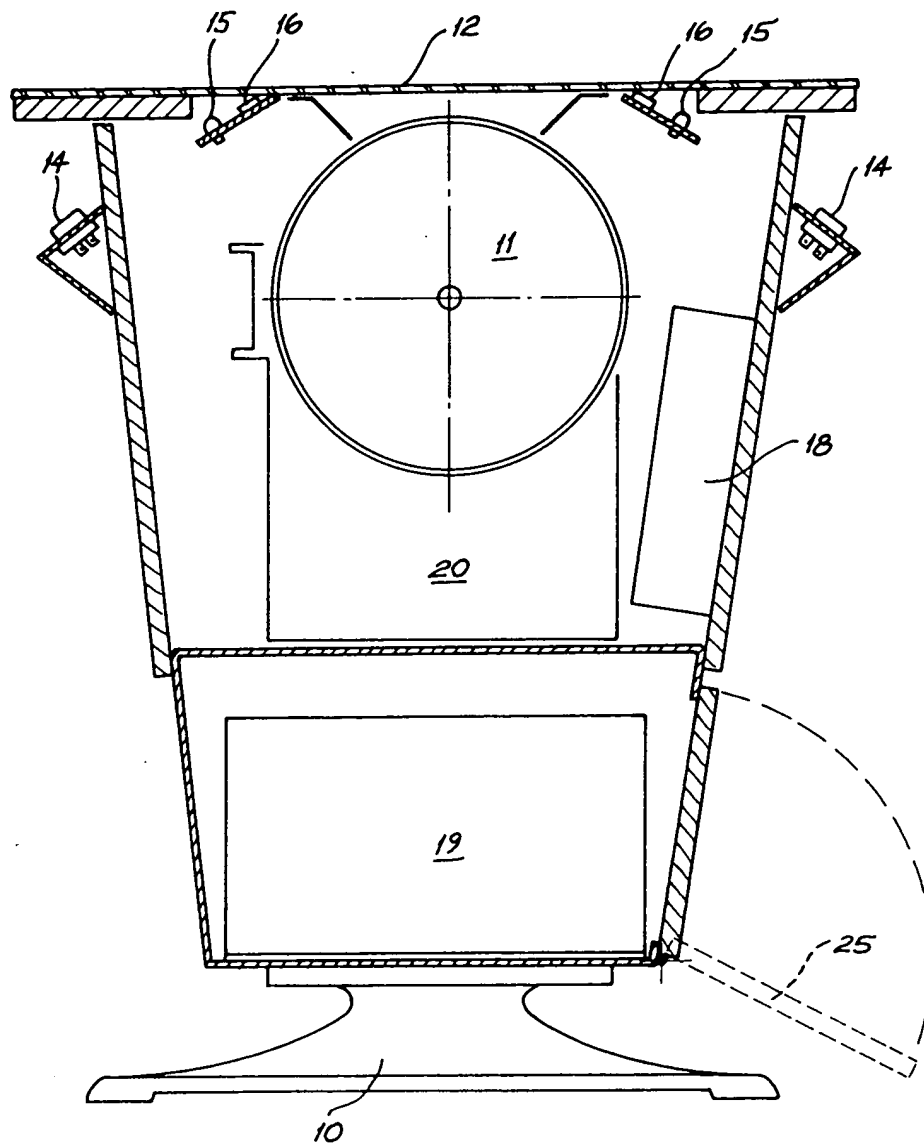


FIG. 3

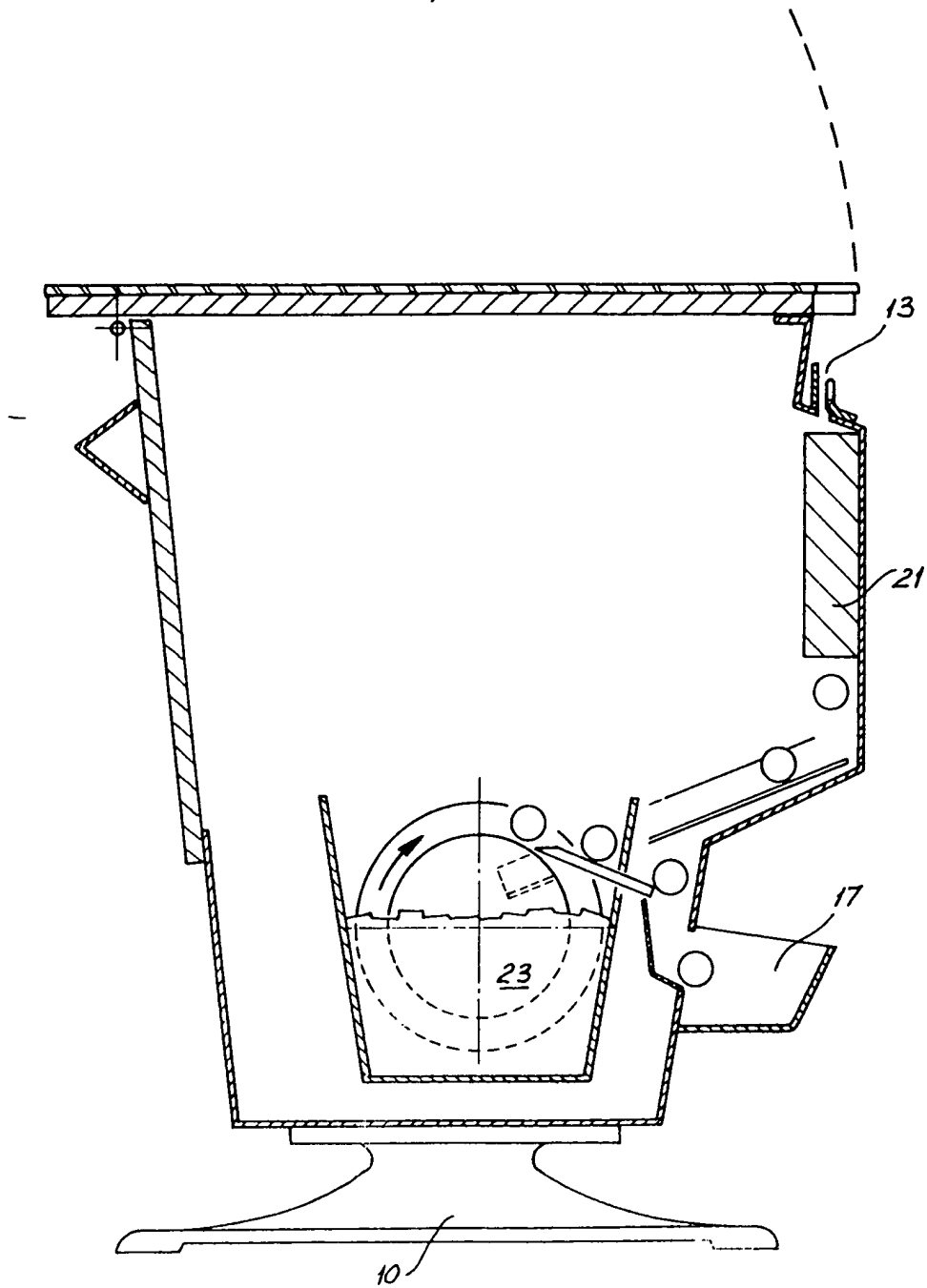


FIG. 4

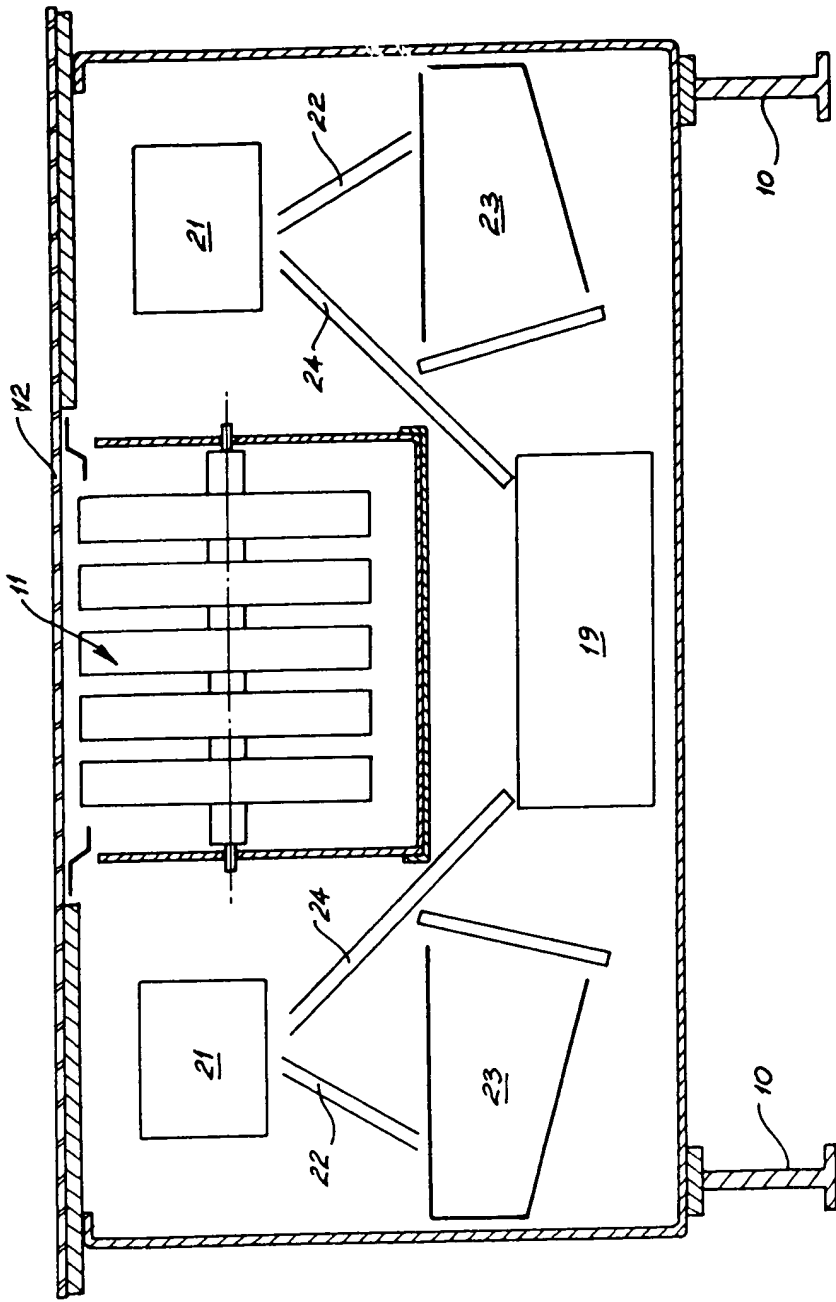


FIG. 5

SPECIFICATION

Improvements in or relating to poker machines

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The present invention relates to poker machines sometimes also known as fruit machines or slot machines and had for its object the provision of a poker machine in an entirely new format.

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Traditionally poker machines are enclosed in cabinets the face of which is arranged vertically so that that portion of the reels displaying symbols is seen through a window which is generally in a vertical plane. Poker machines are normally arranged so that they are played by a player standing up facing the machine with the display of symbols approximately at eye height.

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It has now been appreciated that a variety of advantages may be achieved by the presentation of a poker machine in a somewhat different format such that players can play the machine when seated. This provides various advantages described below and in addition facilitates the provision of means whereby a poker machine may be played by two or more players in a competitive or quasi-competitive situation.

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The present invention consists in a poker machine enclosed in a cabinet in the form of a table or like article of furniture, the symbols of the poker machines reels being displayed through a substantially horizontal window in the table surface, means being provided on the cabinet whereby the poker machine can be played by a player or players seated adjacent the cabinet.

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In order that the nature of the invention may be better understood and put into practice a preferred form thereof is hereinafter described, by way of example, with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

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Figure 1 is a perspective view of a poker machine enclosed in a cabinet according to the invention.

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Figure 2 is an end elevation thereof,

Figure 3 is a cross-sectional view taken through the middle of the machine,

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Figure 4 is a cross-sectional view through the coin entry of the machine, and

Figure 5 is a longitudinal cross-section illustrating the paths of coins in the machine.

As depicted in the drawing the cabinet consists of a free standing table supported above the ground on feet 10, the undersides of the table are enclosed to contain the poker machine mechanism but, as shown are sloped. The raising of the cabinet from floor and the sloping of the sides provide foot and knee room for a person sitting at the table.

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The poker machine mechanisms contained within the cabinet is of any known kind. In contrast to normal practice however the reel assembly 11 is viewed through a window 12

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in the horizontal top surface of the cabinet.

The particular embodiment of the invention illustrated is intended for use by two players one sitting on either side of the table. In this arrangement there is one poker machine reel assembly 11 and one window 12 through which the symbols of the reel assembly are viewed. The controls are however duplicated as are the pay out mechanisms. On each side of the cabinet is a coin entry slot 13 and game control buttons 14, the pressing of one of which initiates operation of the poker machine. The additional game control buttons 14 are provided so that which the nature of the "game" played on the machine may be varied by changes in configuration of electrical circuitry associated with the machine. Each player sees a row of indicating lamps 15 which give an indication as to which of the two players has control of the poker machine for the time being and other information. Displayed before the players is also a credit meter 16. Pay outs are made through the chip tray 17.

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In addition to the reel assembly 11 there is contained within the cabinet the reel operating mechanism 20, the microprocessor based controller 18 and the cash box 19. Associated with each coin entry 13 is a coin checking and control assembly 21 wherein the coin is checked for validity and if spurious fed by chute (not shown) to the players chip tray 17. If accepted the coin is fed by chute 22 to the players coin dispenser 23. When the dispenser 23 is full the coin control assembly 21 diverts valid coins by chute 24 to the cash box 19 which is removed for emptying through the locking door 25.

While the machine can be played by one player alone in the manner of an ordinary poker machine the format adopted allows it to be played by two players together one seated on each side of the machine, under such circumstances both players can insert any number of coins into their coin slots 13 and the number each has inserted is shown on that players credit meter 16. Players can then play alternately the first player pressing his game control button 14 to initiate a game and receiving a credit if any on his credit meter. The second game can then be initiated by the second player pressing his game control button 14. Plays are continued alternately until one player's credit is exhausted whereupon the other player becomes the winner of that game. Alternatively players may play together by pressing their game control buttons and receiving the credit on their credit meters of any wins. If either player does not wish to participate in a particular game he merely refrains from pressing his game control button. It would be possible to programme the controller 18 in such a manner that both players participation in each game is automatic until the players credit runs out.

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At the termination of play any player having a credit can recover this by pressing the button 26 which results in coins to the amount of his credit being delivered to his chip tray 17.

The provision of a credit meter on the machine is not absolutely essential and in a machine in which credit meters were not provided each player participating in a game would have any coins arising from a winning combination paid into his chip tray 17 instead of being credited on a credit meter.

Whereas in normal poker machines and in the machine shown in the drawings three symbols of each reel are shown in the window 12, the line formed by the central symbol of each set of three being the "pay line", the machine may be set up so as to provide two "pay lines" one for each player so that players may compete directly in each game played on the machine.

The arrangement described is only one of many possible variations using the format provided by the invention. Control of the machine may be arranged, for example, so that the players are in a competitive or quasi-competitive situation. The same format could readily be used for a machine intended for play by a single player or by more than two players. Accommodation can be provided if desired for more than one poker machine, separate controls being provided for each machine.

The top of the cabinet may readily be arranged to be a single uninterrupted sheet of glass, making it easy to clean and making the cabinet suitable for use either as an ordinary table or partly as an ordinary table and partly as a poker machine. It is contemplated that a number of persons might be seated around the cabinet with one or more playing the machine and others watching or taking refreshment. While the format provided by the invention will occupy more floor space than the traditional poker machine cabinet it is believed that in many cases the seating accommodation provided at the cabinet will simply replace table seating accommodation of the traditional type.

The precise form of the cabinet illustrated in the drawings is given by way of example only as it is clear that within the proposed format a wide variety of table designs can be provided, with a view to enhancing their convenience of use and the players comfort.

CLAIMS

1. A poker machine enclosed in a cabinet in the form of a table or like article of furniture, the symbols of the poker machines reels being displayed through a substantially horizontal window in the table surface, means being provided on the cabinet whereby the poker machine can be played by a player or players seated adjacent the cabinet.

2. A poker machine as claimed in claim 1, wherein provision is made on the cabinet for operation of the machine by two players one seated on each side of the cabinet.

3. A poker machine as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the cabinet is supported from the ground on feet and the sides are sloping to provide foot and knee room for a person sitting at either side of the cabinet.

4. A poker machine as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein the table surface is constituted by a single uninterrupted sheet of glass.

5. A poker machine substantially as described with reference to and as illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

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